AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.   (Currently amended) A digital camera for picking up a scene with an image sensor and forming a frame of image data representative of the scene with a signal processor, comprising:

a fingerprint sensor provided on an exterior of said digital camera for sensing a fingerprint to produce inputted fingerprint data;

a fingerprint register for registering <u>one or more</u> fingerprint data with <u>a</u> specific ~~identifiers~~ <u>identifier</u> allotted <u>for each registered fingerprint data</u>;

a memory for storing therein frames of image data so that each frame is associated with one of the identifiers;

a comparison circuit for comparing the inputted fingerprint data with the <u>one or more</u> fingerprint data registered with said fingerprint register to produce identified fingerprint data;

an authorizer for storing therein an identifier specific to the fingerprint data identified by said comparison circuit;

a user interface circuit for inputting an instruction to said digital camera; and

a controller for accessing said authorizer to reference the identifier stored in said authorizer and executing an instruction if the instruction is intended to handle a frame of image data associated with the identifier stored in said authorizer.

2.   (Original) The digital camera in accordance with claim 1, further comprising a shutter release button on which said fingerprint sensor is provided.

3.   (Original) The digital camera in accordance with claim 1, wherein said fingerprint sensor comprises a plurality of electrodes and an insulating film for forming capacitors in combination with a finger, and senses the finger's ridges and troughs according to each amount of electric charge accumulated under the electrodes.

4.   (Original) The digital camera in accordance with claim 1, wherein frames of image data stored in said memory are associated with one of the identifiers so that the frames are separately stored in one or more folders prepared in said memory, said fingerprint register registers therewith folder names for the identifiers, and said authorizer stores therein a folder name.

5.   (Currently amended) The digital camera in accordance with claim 4, wherein the folders in said memory ~~may be~~ are grouped under one or more super folders, and the fingerprint data registered with said fingerprint register ~~may have~~ include folder names of the super folders.

6.   (Original) The digital camera in accordance with claim 4, further comprising a record control circuit for storing a folder name specific to the fingerprint data identified by said comparison circuit,

said controller recording, in response to an instruction to record a frame of image data formed by said digital camera, the frame into a folder having the folder name.

7.   (Original) The digital camera in accordance with claim 4, further comprising:

a password inputting circuit for inputting a password specific to a folder and adapted to be required to open the folder; and

a password storage for storing the password,

said controller outputting, in response to an instruction to output a folder from said memory to a recording medium, the folder and the password specific to the folder to the recording medium.

8.   (Original) The digital camera in accordance with claim 1, wherein said authorizer stores no identifier as long as no fingerprint data is identified by said comparison circuit,

said controller executing, in response to an instruction to register new fingerprint data with said fingerprint register, the instruction in the case said authorizer contains a folder name specific to the fingerprint data registered with said register.

9.   (Currently amended) A method of personal identification for use in a digital camera, comprising the steps of:

inputting fingerprint data to the digital camera;

checking if the inputted fingerprint data is identical with fingerprint data registered with a fingerprint register of the digital camera; and

automatically registering the inputted fingerprint data having ~~an~~ a corresponding identifier with the fingerprint register in ~~the~~ case no fingerprint data is registered with the fingerprint register.

10. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

comparing the inputted fingerprint data with the fingerprint data registered with the fingerprint register in ~~the~~ case the fingerprint data is registered with the fingerprint register; and

turning off the power of the digital camera in ~~the~~ case no fingerprint data is identified with the inputted fingerprint data.

11. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 10, further comprising the steps of:

storing the identifier of the inputted fingerprint data in an authorizer in ~~the~~ case the registered fingerprint data is identified with the inputted fingerprint data;

checking if an instruction inputted to the digital camera is intended for a new fingerprint registration; and

registering newly inputted fingerprint data with the fingerprint register in ~~the~~ case the instruction inputted is intended for a new fingerprint registration.

12. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 11, further comprising the step of executing the instruction inputted if the instruction is intended to handle a frame of image data associated with ~~an identifier~~ the identifier stored in the authorizer.

13. (New) A method for allowing access to a digital camera, comprising:

receiving fingerprint data of a user of the digital camera;

determining if the digital camera is being used for a first time; and

registering the fingerprint data of the user when it is determined that the digital camera is being used for the first time.

14. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the fingerprint data of the user is a first fingerprint data and the step of registering the finger print data of the user when it is determined that the digital camera is being used for the first time comprises:

acquiring and verifying a password associated with the user;

acquiring a second fingerprint data of the user;

comparing the first and second fingerprint data of the user; and

registering the fingerprint data of the user with a fingerprint register when it is determined that the first and second fingerprint data of the user match.

15.   (New) The method of claim 14, further comprising:

creating a storage area in a memory of the digital camera corresponding to the fingerprint data of the user.

16.   (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the storage area corresponding to the fingerprint data of the user is accessible only by the user.

17.   (New) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

determining whether the user is a registered user when it is determined that the digital camera is not being used for the first time; and

disallowing access when it is determined that the user is not a registered user.

18.   (New) The method of claim 17, wherein the step of determining whether the user is a registered user comprises:

comparing the fingerprint data of the user with one or more fingerprint data of registered users of the digital camera;

determining that the user is registered if the fingerprint data of the user matches with any of the one or more fingerprint data of registered users; and

determining that the user is not registered if the fingerprint data of the user matches with none of the one or more fingerprint data of registered users.

19.   (New) The method of claim 17, further comprising:

receiving an instruction from the user when it is determined that the user is a registered user; and

registering a new user to the digital camera when the received instruction specifies registering the new user.

20.   (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the step of registering the new user to the digital camera when the received instruction specifies registering the new user comprises:

receiving a first fingerprint data of the new user;

acquiring and verifying a password associated with the new user;

acquiring a second fingerprint data of the new user;

comparing the first and second fingerprint data of the new user; and

registering the fingerprint data of the new user with a fingerprint register

when it is determined that the first and second fingerprint data of the new user

match.

21.   (New) The method of claim 20, further comprising:

creating a storage area in a memory of the digital camera corresponding

to the fingerprint data of the new user.

22.   (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the storage area

corresponding to the fingerprint data of the new user is accessible only by the

new user or by a group to which the new user belongs.

23.   (New) The method of claim 19, further comprising:

determining whether the registered user is authorized to issue the

received instruction when the received instruction does not specify registering

the new user; and

executing the received instruction when it is determined that the

registered user is authorized to issue the received instruction.

24.   (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the user is a currently registered user and the step of determining whether the registered user is authorized to issue the received instruction comprises:

determining whether the received instruction is intended to handle a frame of image data associated with a storage area corresponding to the currently registered user; and

executing the received instruction when it is determined that the received instruction is intended to handle the frame of image data associated with the storage area corresponding to the currently registered user.

25.   (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the storage area is considered to be corresponding to the currently registered user if the storage area is the currently registered user's private area or an area associated with a group to which the current registered user belongs.

26.   (New) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

receiving an instruction from the user when it is determined that the digital camera is not being used for the first time;

determining whether the received instruction is a restricted permission instruction; and

executing the received instruction when it is determined that the received

instruction is a restricted permission instruction.